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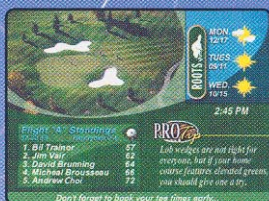
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COMMUNITY MEDIA
AUTUMN 2000

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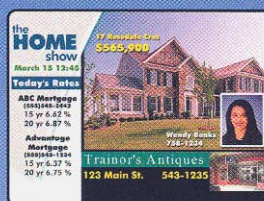
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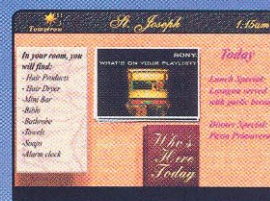
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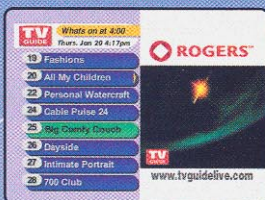
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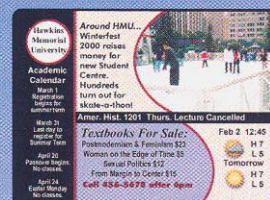
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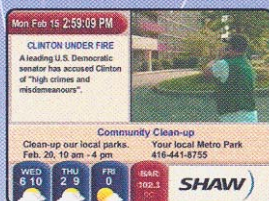
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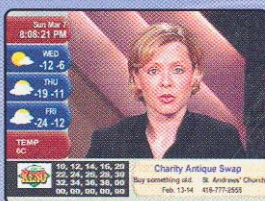
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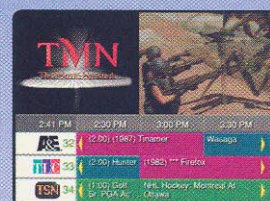
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AUTUMN 2000
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Community Media Review [ISSN 1074-9004] is published quarterly by the Alliance for Community Media, Inc. Subscriptions \$35 a year. Please send subscriptions, memberships, address changes, advertising and editorial inquiries to the Alliance for Community Media, 666 11th St. NW, Suite 740, Washington, DC 20001-4542. Telephone 202.393.2650 voice, 202.393.2653 fax. Email: acm@alliancecm.org or visit the Alliance for Community Media website at www.alliancecm.org

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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, Community Media Review shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.

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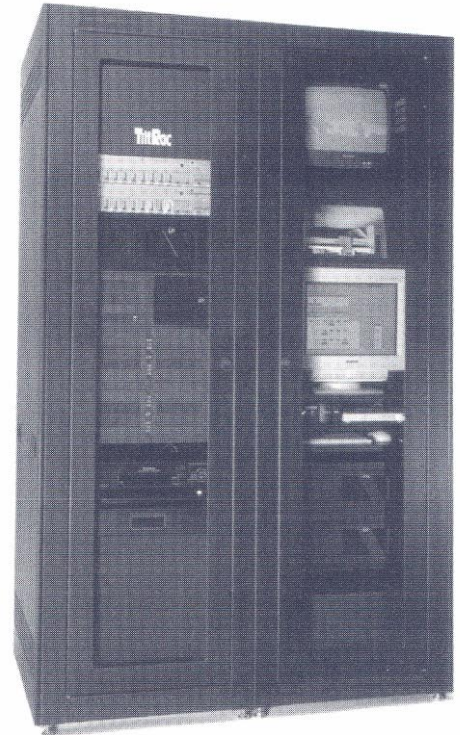
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True Peace Is the Presence of Justice

by **Bunnie Riedel**

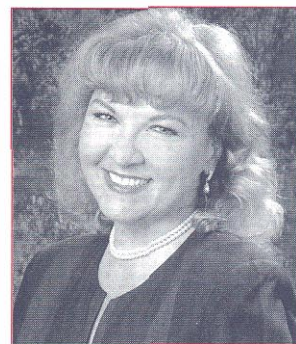
Executive Director,
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One of my favorite Martin Luther King Jr. quotes is "True peace is not the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice." I remember that quote every time I am in a situation where I find myself having to advocate for something when it would have been so much easier just to shut up and "go along." Advocacy frequently involves rocking the boat and risking that others will be made uncomfortable. It means challenging the status quo so that, hopefully, a change for the better can be made. Advocacy is not easy, it usually requires a certain amount of tension be created, but if "justice" is the end result being an advocate can be satisfying.

In the past year a great deal of tension was created by national representation organizations (such as the NAACP) when they challenged the mainstream media's lack of inclusion of minorities in television programs, talent and managerial positions. At first networks made excuses, and finally they conceded that minority representation was dismal, and they promised to do what they could to improve their record. But if the issue had not been raised, I wonder how long the situation would have persisted unnoticed (at least by the network executives). Even PBS's record of minority inclusion has been terrible with minority representation at only 10 percent on their flagship show *NewsHour*.

I have frequently bragged about how Public, Educational and Governmental access serves racial minority and second-language communities. Recently while citing a litany of ethnic and racial minority programming on PEG access, a cable association president countered that they had just produced a program in Spanish and were web-streaming it. I was a bit taken back. Hadn't he heard what I said? Yes, we have Spanish language programming, but we also have Cantonese, Mandarin, Farsi, Greek, Portuguese, Somali, Tagalog, Hmong, Arabic, Albanian, Serbian, Japanese, Hindi and the list goes on. This rich tapestry of cul-

There are great rewards to be found when we seek to be inclusive. Talent, energy and new ideas result when we widen our circles of leadership, colleagues and acquaintances. Certainly the media we create becomes more relevant to our communities.



ture, race and language is possible because we open our doors to all and we believe that PEG programming exists to serve the community.

But it is not enough to have programming that serves minority communities. We must facilitate minority involvement at all levels of the PEG community, from production staff to engineers to executive directors to cable commissioners. And we can't just wait for "them" to walk through "our" doors. We must go out into the community and actively engage minority involvement. As a coalition chair in Los Angeles, I was charged with the task of increasing minority involvement in the coalition. The truth is I was chairing a coalition of all white women. One of the complaints I heard from coalition members is that "they" never come to "our" meetings.

When I asked whether or not "we" ever went to "their" meetings, I was met with dumb stares. So I made it my priority to reach out, attend and get involved in the organizations of minority women. Sure enough, attendance by various minority women's groups at our coalition events increased. All it took was effort and a handshake and the connection was made. And maybe that's how we all break down the walls that divide us, one handshake at a time.

On the Alliance national board level, we have discussed how we can increase minority representation on the national and regional boards. Serena Mann, as the Equal Opportunity Chair, has been relentless in reminding us we need to do more. I have no doubt that Karen Chalmers, our new EO Chair, will do the same. It is important that we look at our-

selves and figure out ways to increase minority involvement in our leadership components. If we drop the discussion and become complacent we will be just as remiss as the mainstream media.

There are great rewards to be found when we seek to be inclusive. Talent, energy and new ideas result when we widen our circles of leadership, colleagues and acquaintances. Certainly the media we create becomes more relevant to our communities. I believe PEG is ahead of the national media in terms of inclusiveness because it is community created. Minority populations can speak with their own voices and deliver their own messages without being filtered by someone else's lenses. Minority educational concerns can be addressed and effective solutions can be implemented quickly. Government messages can be delivered in a multitude of languages so no minority population in any community is left disenfranchised (this was evidenced by multi-language census messages that took place throughout the country).

As I travel the country and meet Alliance members and PEG activists in their communities, I see an effort to create a media that looks a lot more like America as it actually is. It is a media full of color and diversity, a media of many tongues and traditions. A media where differences are appreciated, respected and embraced. That is not to say that there aren't moments of tension in our community media, but at least we can say that we are making an effort to move toward justice.

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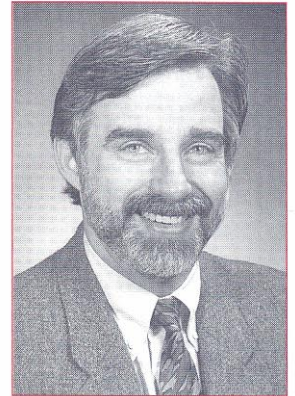
by Rob Brading

Local television is one of the predominant sources of information for the American public. With presidential elections upon us, we can begin to evaluate how well our local stations are doing in campaign coverage. Recent studies say not very well. Some major markets average six seconds of coverage an evening. That's barely enough time for a sound bite, much less a thoughtful report.

That's not to say that political talk doesn't make the air waves that we, the public, own. During the first four months of this year, over \$100 million was spent in 75 major U.S. markets on over 150,000 political advertisements. You can only wonder in awe what those numbers will look like come November 7.

In response to the overall decline of political conversation on our airwaves, a presidential commission recommended that local stations devote five minutes each night to "candidate-centered discourse" starting 30 days before an election. Given the exigencies of commercial media, one can hardly hope that it would be five minutes for each candidate for national or statewide office. If those guidelines were followed (which they're not), at five minutes a night, we've got a whopping total of two hours and thirty minutes of non-commercial political discourse. Divide that by the number of candidates running for Congress or national or statewide office in a small state like Oregon and you've got a little bit more than 15 minutes for each office. Commercial networks have little interest in changing the system. Most of

I don't have any illusions that Al Gore or George W. Bush will saunter through the doors of your (or my) center any time soon, but many of our community media centers provide more political speech and do more to strengthen and build democracy in a week than commercial stations do in an entire election season.



the political speech heard today is paid for. It doesn't take a network executive to figure out that the networks profit from all those advertisements and that their financial motivation is to maintain the status quo. Why would you give someone free air time when they're paying you thousands of dollars for it? If that weren't enough, commercial news has decided that what bleeds, is cute or somehow heart wrenching, is more profitable than political coverage. Oh sure, cable news networks claim they provide hours of political coverage, but, if you can hear past the screaming and interruptions (my siblings and I would have been told to go to our room if we'd acted like the political pundits on talk shows), you soon realize that their award-winning coverage should have gotten prizes for the insipid, the inane, the banal and the just-not-very-bright.

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Although they trumpet their own First Amendment rights, commercial media are usually the first to say that the public can't be trusted with those same rights and to defend their turf against any intrusion. Local affiliates are often the first folks to step into the fray on the side of "editorial standards" when a controversial program hits a community media center. Their actual interest is not in building democracy or protecting the genius of the First Amendment, but in defending their ability to make money. As the vice-mayor of Tucson, Steve Leal, said at July's Alliance Conference, free speech is wasted on the press.

Rob Brading is chairman of the Alliance for Community Media and executive director of Multnomah Community Television in Gresham, Oregon, email rbrading@mctv.org, telephone 503.491.7636 x318.

Upcoming Conferences

The **Northwest Regional Conference** will be held April 26-28, 2001 in Portland, OR. Thursday, April 26 will be a legislative "Day at the Capital." For more information, contact Rosa Leonardi at 503.588.2288 or by email at cctv@open.org.

The **25th Anniversary Alliance for Community Media International Conference and Trade Show** will be held in Washington, DC July 11-14, 2001 at the Renaissance Hotel. A Friday night party will include a three hour cruise tour on the Potomac River aboard the *Spirit of Washington*. For more information, contact the national office at 202.393.2650, or visit the Alliance website at www.alliancecm.org



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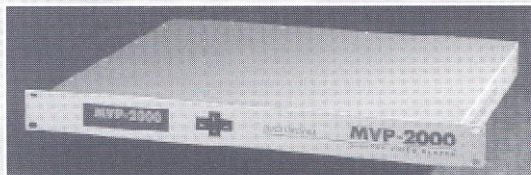
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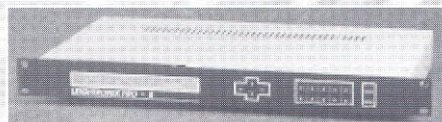
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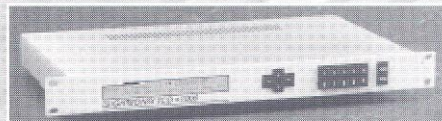
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Fulfilling the Mandate

The Diversity of Community Media

Community media, at its core, is about every person and every idea. Commercial media misses the rich and important messages of millions of Americans who are not shown on the evening news or on sitcoms or dramas, even though they make up increasing portions of the population. Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access is the venue through which forgotten voices can share their valuable insights and stories. Mass media presents the faces of a part of America. Community media proudly shines a spotlight on every different face so that we all can achieve a better understanding of each other.

This issue of *Community Media Review* is a celebration of the people who aren't often seen in commercial media outlets. The diversity of community media is reflected in the wide cross section of minority producers, access center staff and board members who are profiled here. You will meet people from across the country who tell their stories brilliantly on community access. Latino, Asian, African and Native Americans talk about their heritage and culture, and by doing so help strengthen the foundations of their communities. These stories aren't heard anywhere else and their value and lessons would be lost to us all without community media.

The message of these profiles is that everyone has an important story to tell. Commercial media may be lacking in its coverage of these storytellers, but their vision and their passion are vital to our communities and should be embraced and showcased. They use access to help their communities grow, inform people about their history and reach out to groups who otherwise would be left behind. They use their talents to foster learning and provide their neighbors with enriching views into worlds they might never have known. They bond with their own communities and share that relationship through community media.

These are stories of diversity, culture and strength. This is the world of community media—a world that welcomes everyone.

— Matthew Bennett

Matthew Bennett is the Senior Associate for Communications and Government Relations at the Alliance national office in Washington, DC. He is responsible for coordinating the Alliance's advocacy efforts and public relations. Bennett is a recent graduate of American University and is currently pursuing his Master's degree in political science. He can be reached at 202.393.2650 or at government@alliancecm.org

NEW YORK CITY, NY

FELIX LEO CAMPOS

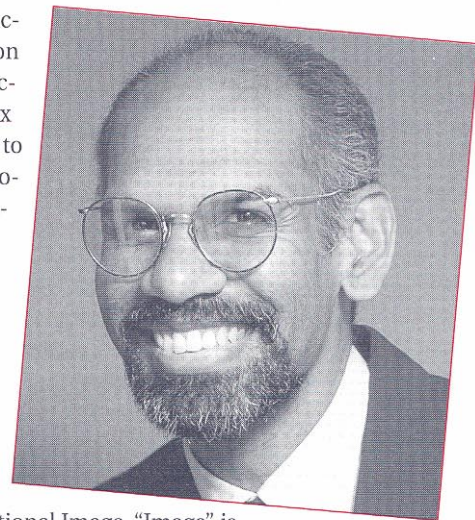
Producer. Activist. Supporter of free speech.

All these words fit, but “Nuyorrican” is the word used by Felix Leo Campos to describe himself as a New York City-born Latino of Puerto Rican heritage. He started in PEG access in 1987. His program, *A.C.E.S.*, promotes and publicizes the talents and resources of the Latino, bilingual, and ethnic communities of New York City. The acronym represents Arts, Culture, Entrepreneurs/Education, and Services. Since the pilot program, Felix has produced over 520 programs, with the show now on a bi-weekly schedule. Neither cable, commercial or PBS television programming has duplicated this accomplishment. In 1989, Felix formed an ad hoc group of producers, ICPA, to address the producer community's needs. During this time, the franchise agreement was coming to an end and there was fear of PEG access being left out of the new agreement, terminating its invaluable service to the Spanish-speaking ethnic communities. With the help of Felix and his group, Manhattan Neighborhood Network is still a dynamic public access facility.

Subsequent producers' action led to the following ideas and suggestions implemented at MNN: autonomous organization free from both the cable franchise and municipality, access to equipment and facilities, training in video/TV production, and the creation of a grant for which producers can apply to defer their production expenses. Another provision led to representa-

tion of the producers' community on the board of directors. In 1993, Felix was recruited on to the board as a producer representative. His term expired in June, 2000. Felix also currently serves as presidente of Image/Imagen de Nueva York, a local chapter of the national

organization, National Image. “Image” is a non-profit organization addressing the needs for personal and professional development of the Latino community nationwide, in the arenas of education, employment, and civil rights. Recently, Felix and Image hosted a panel of representatives from seven Latino Internet companies, which educated, informed, and entertained an over-booked room on the topic of “Hispanics/Latinos & the Information Age.”



NEW YORK CITY, NY

HYE-JUNG PARK

Hye-Jung Park came of age as a social activist in the turbulent era of the pro-democracy movement of the early 1980s in South Korea. She witnessed first hand what the mainstream media were reporting and what was really happening on the streets of Seoul. And she helped smuggle clandestine video tapes of the demonstrations and police action out of the country, so foreign media could learn the truth as well.



“Korea was under military dictatorship,” she recounts. “Videos were used to bring out the truth. People could see what was going on.” It led her to the United States and media studies at Hunter College in New York, followed by an M.A. from the New School for Social Research. And though she's returned to Korea many times, New York City is home these days, where she recently moved from director of programs at the Downtown Community TV Center to project director for the fledgling Youth Channel at Manhattan Neighborhood Network.

The Youth Channel is an initiative funded by the Soros Foundation's Open Society Institute and aims to empower youth in all facets of the channel, from production and programming to governance. It will become the first such channel in the United States when it officially launches next spring. “It is the channel for their voices,” she says.

Hye-Jung is active in numerous local, national and international cultural and media organizations, serving at one time or another on the boards of Videazimut, National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting, Media Network, and the NYC-based North Star Fund, along with a number of ethnic cultural organizations, such as the Rainbow Center and the Chinese Staff and Worker's Association Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence. She's driven by a personal mission to bring people and movements together. “I want to find a way how your issue is connected to my issue and how we can work together,” she explains. “Solidarity!” Media is her method.

She's also a talented video producer and director, including among others her most recent, *#7 Train from Main Street*, a documentary on new immigrants to Queens/Reel, New York, and *The Women Outside*, a PBS *P.O.V.* documentary on the U.S. military and Korean women. She also has curated a number of art and media exhibitions and taught as adjunct faculty at area colleges and universities.

— Tim Goodwin

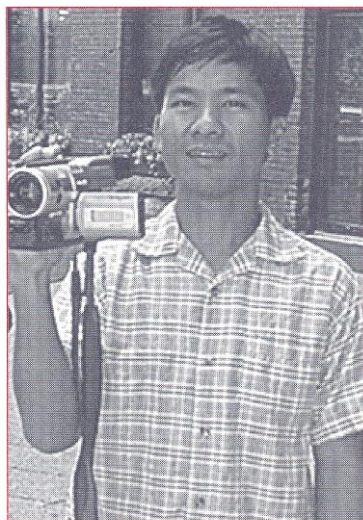
LOWELL, MA

CAMBODIAN ACCESS TV

Community media is often not about a single person. Many times, groups of people come together to spread a message of inclusion. In Lowell, Massachusetts, the Cambodian community has taken to access television with a passion. In the early 1980s, a large number of Cambodian refugees immigrated to Lowell. Now, the city is home to the second largest Cambodian population in the United States, numbering some 27,000 people. This community does not take freedom of speech lightly. Their experiences with repression in Cambodia have led them to appreciate the ability to speak on television more than any other group in the city.

Currently, there are 14 hours of original Cambodian programming on the Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (LTC) public access channel each week. The shows include religious shows representing Catholic, Protestant and Buddhist points of view, news programs that incorporate local, national and Southeast Asian news gleaned from the Internet and wire services, cultural shows and entertainment programs. One producer has used all the LTC production resources to create a newsletter, television show, radio show and audio stream content on his website. All of these programs are in the Cambodian language, Khmer, since many of the older refugees have not mastered English.

The program producers recognize that for many Cambodians, cable access is the only way they hear about the world and feel connected to the community. Producing shows



Chath pierSath, producer of Cambodia Media Network.

gives them celebrity status in Lowell. Viewership is high among the Cambodian population and if a show does not air as expected, the access station hears about it immediately. When speaking to the Cambodian producers about the value of community media, comments center on its role in promoting self-respect and pride in their rich heritage. Public access allows them to preserve their culture by bringing traditional customs such as music and

dance to life and it helps the refugees to raise Cambodian-American children who can succeed in mainstream society and accept traditional Cambodian values simultaneously. Also, many local organizations have used Public access to reach the Cambodian community with public service announcements in Khmer.

The staff at LTC and the Cambodians have learned a great deal from each other and together have helped the community build a greater sense of understanding.

—Wendy Blom

BOSTON, MA

CURTIS HENDERSON, JR.

It takes strong commitment, dedication and hard work to make an access center run successfully. Curtis Henderson, Jr., general manager of Boston Neighborhood Network, exemplifies such dedication and has brought success to BNN-TV.

Under Henderson's leadership, BNN-TV was awarded \$160,000 in foundation grants for construction of a new Multimedia Center, scheduled to open this fall. The center will provide Boston residents with access to communications technology, multimedia classes and job training to help youth, adults and seniors gain skills to enter the IT/Multimedia field. Accompanying this expansion, BNN-TV Channels 3 and 23 are getting a new visual identity and the center is undertaking new projects such as website development and membership drives. Symbolically, the new BNN-TV mobile production van has been on a goodwill tour to tell Boston residents of the improvements at the access center.

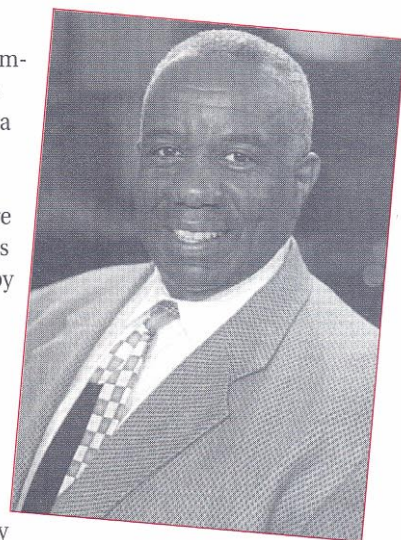
This is the result of hard work by Curtis, a former BNN-TV studio manager and access director, who has been general manager since 1997. He has been associated with BNN-TV since 1983 when he first entered the studio production workshop. The outcome of this venture was a *City Beat* series that featured local musicians and gave Curtis and opportunity to showcase his original music. Curtis was actually first introduced to film and audio visual training while serving in the

Army in Vietnam.

One of his most memorable experiences as a BNN-TV producer was a journey with local activists to Choctaw County, Alabama, where African American voters had been intimidated by the FBI. His documentary *Alabama Summer* tells the story of these rural black residents.

After his longtime commitment to community television, the Alliance for Community Media recognized Curtis in 1994 with The Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity. The award recognized his dedication, leadership and commitment to "ensuring population diversity in the field of community media."

Curtis is forging ahead with restructuring plans to make the year 2000 a memorable one for BNN-TV.



SOMMERVILLE, MA

TEDROS AFEWORKI

Often, world events have great impact on people in our own communities. Somerville Community Access Television member Tedros Afeeworki has utilized Public access to inform his community about the turbulent events in his home country and also to explore its rich cultural heritage. Tedros is from the East African nation Eritrea, which has been engaged in a violent border struggle with neighboring Ethiopia. In 1993, a 32-year-long armed resistance arrived at a victorious close with 99.8 percent of Eritrean voters choosing independence from Ethiopia. A year later, Tedros immigrated to Somerville, Massachusetts. While attending Somerville High School, he participated in an after-school video program taught by Mirror Project Director and former SCAT staff member, Roberto Arévalo. Tedros developed his technical knowledge involving the use of video equipment as well as the aspirations to put them to use, and began to formulate an idea for a show that would be about his country and its victory for freedom.

Since joining SCAT in 1998, Tedros has devoted his energies to producing the weekly series *Eritrean TV*, which currently airs on Saturdays at 9:00 p.m. *Eritrean TV* combines lively segments of Eritrean music videos, performances about the fight for independence and freedom, traditional song and dance, and current news updates from Eritrea. Often, Tedros will transform the studio at SCAT into a makeshift Eritrean news station, videotaping



reports from members of Somerville's Eritrean Community Center. Occasionally, Tedros travels with a SCAT portable camera to other cities. He took a special trip to Washington, DC to interview the President of Eritrea during the head of state's recent trip to the United States. *Eritrean TV*'s viewing audience and popularity are growing as Tedros continues to produce new episodes and bicycle dubs to other public access stations in the Boston area. Tedros' goal is to reach a general audience beyond the Eritrean community and educate them about the culture, customs, and language of Eritrea, a nation still fighting for its freedom.

— Diane Machado, SCAT

HOWARD COUNTY, MD

HARRY EVANS, III

Very few people ever see their ideas come to fruition on television. Harry Evans, III is living proof that if you can dream it, you can do it. His cable access show, *That Show With Those*

Black Guys, is now in its fifth year of production. *That Show* has gone from being a local favorite of Howard County, Maryland to a national program.

"Look, if I told you there was a talk show with a black host in cities like New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Houston you'd probably think I was talking about Oprah Winfrey," says host Evans. "I'm in 23 markets across the country."

That Show was born on the lakefront in Columbia,

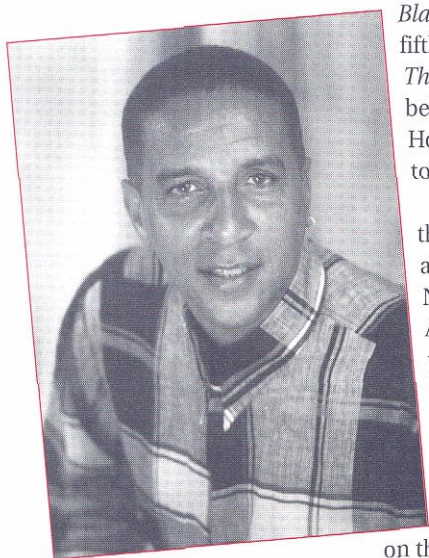
Maryland with the help of fraternity brothers and friends. "We've come a long way from those early days," confides Evans. Today, Evans' own deck serves as his personal studio. It may not be a Hollywood sound stage, but his various guests literally line-up to

be interviewed.

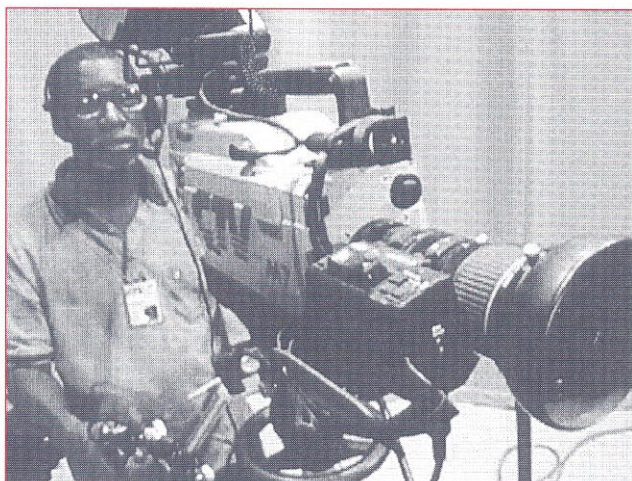
The best way to describe what Evans does is "guerrilla television," a reference to his tenacity in making the show with little or no money. On one show, he has a musician, a news director, and police officer. As a point, Evans only interviews black men of interest and intellect. Evans believes that mainstream television doesn't recognize these kind of people. "I just got sick and tired of waiting for someone to put on a show that reflected the world in which I live."

Evans estimates he reaches 20 million people via cable access. Some of those who have recognized Evans include the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*. The best description of the show comes from *Newsweek*, "a roundtable discussion, Tom Snyder goes black." Evans' guests have included Kweisi Mfume, CEO of the NAACP, Mayors Mark Morial of New Orleans and Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore, and singer Howard Hewitt. He asks typical questions like, "How did you get to where you are? What's your inspiration?" but it's the atypical question that draws in viewers. "Who was your worst boss? Do you pay taxes? Do you pay child support?" His guests answer these questions with ease and without hesitation.

"I love doing this because no one can say I didn't try." This year, he was named the best interviewer on Baltimore Cable Access. He's also had the opportunity to promote cable access, having been invited twice by the National Association of Black Journalists to conduct workshops on creating and maintaining a cable access show.



LARGO, MD



SOL HAMILTON, III

Sol Hamilton, III wanted to tell a story about his trip to Africa. So he borrowed a camcorder to chronicle the events of his trip. Unfortunately, the camcorder did not provide quality video of the trip and Sol felt the story of the land and the people could not be told effectively with the poor tape. So Sol decided to learn

the various techniques of recording at Community Television in Prince George's County, Maryland so he could get the video he wanted the next time.

Sol first went to CTV in 1997 and participated in their training program. Since then, he has crewed for many productions at the access center and has become one of the most active volunteers at the station. CTV Executive Director Sherry Byrne says of Sol, "It is such a pleasure to have such wonderful people like Sol doing so much for our organization and our community."

Recently, Sol began producing a new show at CTV entitled *Kindred*, a roundtable program that consists of five African American women discussing different books. The inspiration for this show came from Sol's work at CTV. The station needed someone to cover book signings at local library and Sol and another volunteer, Rudy Darden, agreed to do it. It was at one of these book signings that Sol met Beverly and Denise, who told Sol in an interview of their book club and passion for discussing literature. Sol discussed the possibility of transforming the club into a show on Public access and they agreed. Hence, *Kindred*, the name of the book club and the natural name for the new show, was created.

Sol has committed himself to continue to work for CTV and his efforts are rewarding for himself, the access center and the community as a whole.

WASHINGTON, DC

KOJO NNAMDI

Kojo Nnamdi has served on the board of the Public Access Corporation of DC since 1993. He was elected chair in 1997. A working and widely respected journalist in Washington, Nnamdi hosts successful programs devoted to in-depth treatment of public affairs on two university-affiliated PBS stations and public access in the District of Columbia (*Evening Exchange* on Howard University's WHUT and *Public Interest* on National Public Radio). "I came to public access," he says, "as a way of returning to the dream I had when I first stated working in media." He sees public access as a viable "democratic alternative" with a different mission than commercial or tax supported television. In public access there are opportunities for everyone to participate. Only in public access are folks able to shape the community programs they and their neighbors view (or hear).

Public access is critical for minority groups. Before public access there was no access for them, and their voices were not heard. "Ownership determines whose views will be presented and discussed in the media," Nnamdi observes. He points out that minorities got into the ownership game too late—when the game was over. Huge conglomerates own most of the media nowadays. In metropolitan Washington, for example, there is only one owner-operated broadcasting station. Conglomerate media gives scant attention to the needs of particular communities or minorities.

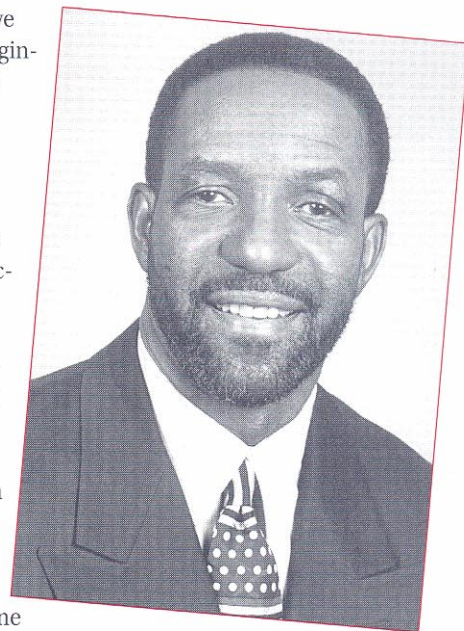
Since there is no ownership in public access, minority communities have unparalleled opportunities to express their voices. "Being seen and heard, by ourselves and others," Nnamdi says, "makes sure we are part of the whole picture. That's how we par-

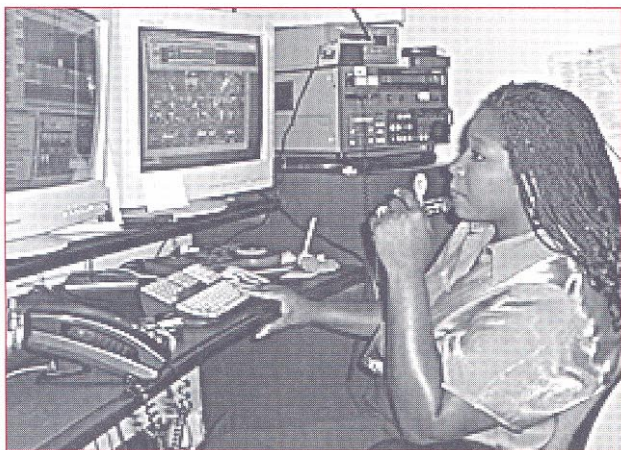
ticipate. That's how we keep from being marginalized. That's how we alert others to make room for us at the table."

"The interests of minorities are always best served by democracy," says Nnamdi, but minorities have not readily seen public access as a tool of democracy.

Minorities were kept out of the media for too long to understand the importance of public access when it came

along. This has been especially true in very poor communities. Learning the value of public access as a democratic tool is a three-step process for most minority groups, according to Nnamdi. First, they see what is necessary to direct a flow of information into their own communities. Later, they recognize how any minority perspective (cultural, ethnic, sexual, economic, etc.) can remain "unknown to the rest of us," as Nnamdi puts it, without public access. Finally, they grasp how being part of the community's conversation invites respect and full participation in society. At this step in the process, Nnamdi concludes, "public access is the turnkey to a vibrant democracy."





HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FL

CORNELIA WASHINGTON

Government access at Hillsborough County-HTV televises public meetings and events for the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners. Among all these government activities, HTV22 viewers also find presentations and discussions about issues that matter to the people of Hillsborough County. Cornelia Washington is an intricate part of this production and her work ensures that the citizens know what is happening with their local government.

Cornelia began television work for Hillsborough County in 1988 as an intern through the Career Connection Minority Intern Program and became a producer/director three years later. Today, as technology keeps developing, Cornelia's knowledge and expertise keeps pace, and her faith helps her handle the pressure of producing a constant stream of quality programing.

"From week to week, I'm always doing something different," she says. Cornelia has contributed to countless projects, but she has several favorites from her tenure at HTV, including: the 1989 *Healthy Baby Contest* to promote healthy diets during pregnancy; *Black Heritage Celebrations*, produced annually to highlight the accomplishments and legacy of African-Americans; *Men II Boys*, focusing on African-American men working with boys in trouble; *Early Care, Education and You*, about the importance of researching your child's daycare facility; *Aging Services Overview*, highlighting six different programs for elderly residents; a 1999 domestic violence PSA campaign that highlighted local nonprofit and government programs dealing with spousal abuse; and *Election Talk*, educating voters monthly about the election process and election related issues.

She now produces the new HTV series *Legacy*, with host Joyce Russell, the county's African-American liaison. The series highlights the diversity of cultures in Hillsborough County.

Cornelia is active in government and represented African-Americans on the Employee Communications Council in 1993 and 1994. She also works in the community, including serving from 1993 to 1995 on the board of directors for the nonprofit Lee Davis Neighborhood Development Corporation. Her participation in the Development Corporation gave her a closer look at needs of African-Americans locally and led to her producing programs on those needs.

Cornelia's outstanding work has been honored with four Southern Sunshine awards from the Alliance's Southeast Region.

MIDLAND, MI

WEN CHENG

Wen Cheng came to the United States from China via Hong Kong and Taiwan in 1959 to study chemistry in graduate school and pursue a doctorate degree. He settled in Midland, Michigan and worked at a chemical company from 1968 until retiring in 1995. It was at this point that Wen was introduced to the world of community media.

Shortly after retirement, Wen was asked to join the Cultural Awareness Committee for the Midland Area Community Foundation, to inform the community on ethnic and cultural differences around the world and expand understanding of diversity. In mid-1997, Wen and the committee thought they could reach more people if they could make a special program at the local public access cable television station, Midland Community TV—MCTV. Wen approached the station manager, who said the center didn't produce programs for groups, but went on to explain that if Wen and his committee wanted to have a show, they should sign up as volunteers, be trained, and do the show themselves. This was the beginning of Wen's commitment to Public access.

The one time "special" program developed into a regular monthly series called *Cultural Awareness*, which debuted in February 1998. It is a half hour program shown twice weekly and there is a new topic each month. The countries and peoples profiled on the show include Czechoslovakia, Greece, India, Japan, Kenya, Tonga, Turkey, China, and more. The *Bonnie Scotland* program, aired in 1999, received the Alliance for Community Media's Central States Region's Philo T. Farnsworth award in the minority/ethnic category.

Wen has become a regular at MCTV, helping out with other shows and giving his time to the new friends he has made. He likens the work of the staff and volunteers to one big, happy family. Of the people at MCTV, Wen says "They allow us to make mistakes, but we have not yet made the same mistake twice—knock on wood!". Wen sums up his work at MCTV with this, "We do worthwhile things for fun."



DAYTON, OH

PATRICK HUGHES

The main reason I became involved with DATV (Dayton Access Television) was because I opened my mouth and made a suggestion," says Patrick Hughes, DATV volunteer/producer.

Hughes recounts the story, "I am a member of the *Dayton International Festival*, which includes the World A'Fair. This festival is made up of 32 ethnic organizations within the Dayton area. At one of our meetings we were brainstorming ideas as to how we could increase our membership. I made the suggestion that we go to DATV and learn how to begin broadcasting our events on their channels. The other members thought this was a good idea and asked that I look into it. So, I became a member of DATV in November, 1997."

Hughes, 50, works approximately 12 hours per week as a volunteer in DATV's Master Control. "I went through the basic field production workshops, the studio workshop, and any other workshop that was offered. I learned how to use the SuperCam, JVCs, and became proficient in all phases of television production in order to become a producer/director."

By becoming a producer/director, he was qualified to use the studio and produce his own show. Within months of becoming a member at DATV, and because he is a member of the Miami Valley African Organization in Dayton, Hughes had a monthly show called *Africa Outlook*.

This is an issue oriented show where current events happening on the African continent are discussed. It focuses on African immigrants who have recently arrived in America. The host is Willie Komoro from Liberia and with him are two panelists, Bitrus

Gwamna from Nigeria and Ed Peagler from the United States. Sometimes, such as the August show, there are guests like Dr. Flora O. Igah, President of the Nigerian Women Cultural Organization.

Hughes' efforts have also produced a true access success story. At Winchester Speedway, ESPN recorded the weekly races. Hughes, Dale Grow and Terry Chunn went to the Speedway, recorded a race, and when race officials saw what Hughes and his



crew produced, told ESPN they wanted the public access producers to cover the event. The reason for the success, in Hughes' words, "Why, because we did a better job than the 'professionals.'" Hughes believes accessibility to the media is easier through public access. His goal is to become a major

television producer. To achieve that goal, he says, will take hard work, discipline and perseverance. To expand his expertise as a producer, he volunteers for as many things as he possibly can. He won the Volunteer Hours Award in 1998 and the Roxie L. Cole Award of Excellence in 1998.

Hughes, reflecting on his work at DATV, said, "I have found my niche here."

— Pat Jessee

FORT WAYNE, IN

MICHAEL BYNUM

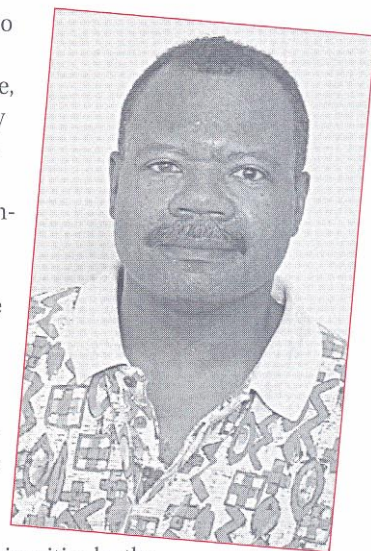
Fort Wayne, Indiana has been home to Michael Bynum his entire life. Growing up in the '50s and '60s, he saw what Fort Wayne used to be—an all-American city. It was a good place to raise a family and people like Michael could do what they wanted to do. Michael wanted to make good television. Michael got interested in public access television mainly because his kids were very small and he wanted to have quality home movies of them.

He purchased a video camera in 1984 and wanted to make videos that were more interesting for himself and others to look at. Even growing up, Michael had an interest in television. He and his friends would make TV sets out of old furniture cartons. When Michael learned about the opportunities to be a part of "real TV", his interests heightened. Other people noticed Michael's obsession with video media and his desire to always provide entertaining as well as professional looking documented events. People wanted him to record things for them. He found people wanting him to be an outlet to vent their frustrations/enthusiasm for truth. Michael says this interaction, via community media, changes the stereotype of untouchable media personnel to the average, approachable person.

Michael supports access television because he believes it

honestly provides a chance to express innermost thoughts and feelings in a constructive, positive way. There are many different points of view, perspectives that otherwise would not be realized by non-minority people. "Being a minority," Michael says, "means having to look at the broader picture of life and how it relates to your personal development with non-minorities. Access television, for minorities, opens up other avenues of communication for a reality check of the perception of minorities by the greater community at large."

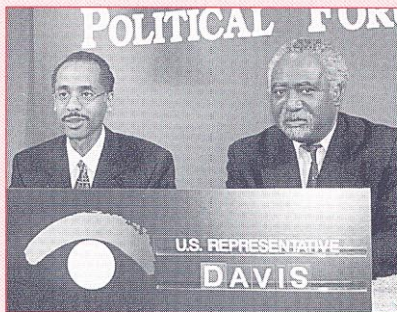
Every minority group has events and situations that they would like others to experience in a positive and informative way. Non-minority individuals can realize the importance of certain issues and situations regarding minority cultural/ethnic background through a medium such as public access. Michael's firm belief is that "Access community TV provides a way for your own personal interpretation and story to be told."



BUILDING A BETTER ALTERNATIVE

By U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis

Protests organized last year by the NAACP, the National Council of La Raza and other groups once again brought into the national spotlight TV's persistent misrepresentation and under-representation of minorities. The networks responded by adding a few minority characters to their program lineups, but the situation has remained essentially unchanged. The struggle to hold networks accountable must continue. But we must also work to build alternatives.



U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis (right) appears on CAN TV's *Political Forum* with CAN TV board member Michael Thomas.

This is an opportunity for the Public access movement to come into its own. As more people recognize the networks' failure to represent the diversity of America on both sides of the camera, public access can seize the moment as it continues to develop into one of this country's most vital cultural resources. For years, my office has worked closely with Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV), the public access station serving the city of Chicago. I host frequent town hall meetings in my congressional district, which stretches west from the Loop, through Chicago's Westside and into the Western Suburbs and south along the State Street corridor.

CAN TV has carried several of these forums, on police brutality, voter fraud, and other challenges facing the district. CAN TV raises public awareness of important issues by making these discussions available to Chicagoans who did not attend in person or who would like to revisit the topic. This kind of television treats the public as members of a community rather than just potential consumers of sponsors' products. I have been a regular guest on CAN TV's weekly call-in program *Political Forum*.

Community residents tell me that they feel this has helped me to better serve the district, by reaching out to constituents whom I may not have had the chance to meet in person. My office participated in a PSA campaign on CAN TV to promote participation in the U.S. Census. This promotional work helped to alleviate the undercount, especially in economically impacted communities. In 1990, the undercount cost Chicago and some of our suburbs millions of federal dollars in aid to schools and social services.

These are just a few examples of how public access can, and does, fulfill television's potential for democratic discourse and community building. Through public access, people can create dynamic, constructive, substantial television programming, a real alternative to much of what the commercial media giants offer. One neighborhood, one city at a time, we truly can change the world. In this time of opportunity, the Alliance for Community Media stands at the forefront of organizing the national and international movement to build a true alternative—television by and for the people.

Danny K. Davis was chosen by the people of the 7th Congressional District of Illinois as their Representative in Congress on November 5, 1996. He was reelected on November 3, 1998 with 93 percent of the vote. In the 106th Congress Davis sits on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and its subcommittees on the Postal Service and Census. He is a member of the Small Business Committee and serves as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Government Programs and Oversight. Davis is a member of the Black Caucus, the Progressive Caucus, the India Caucus, the Steel Caucus and the Hellenic Caucus. Before serving in Congress Davis was a member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners for six years. Previously, he served for 11 years as a member of the Chicago City Council. Prior to seeking public office Davis worked as an educator, community organizer, health planner/administrator and civil rights advocate.

CHICAGO, IL

AZAKA AJANAKU

Azaka Ajanaku and his wife Eileen Bellabe were full of ideas when they went out to dinner one night in the early 1990s. Ajanaku had spent a year helping out on *La Difference*, the first Haitian program on Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV). Now he was ready to start a program of his own.

"We wanted to call it something that reflects our lives as an interracial couple," Ajanaku says. "But I also wanted something that reflects my culture, as a speaker of French and Creole." The show, which they named *Unity in Diversity—C'est la Vie*, promotes cultural sensitivity, racial understanding, and community empowerment within the Haitian community.

"When mainstream media go to Haiti, they go to the poorest neighborhood, they talk about the misery and poverty," Ajanaku says. "It's true there is poverty, but people never see the good side. I tell them about the other side, the dance, the way people worship, eat, talk, sometimes the politics."

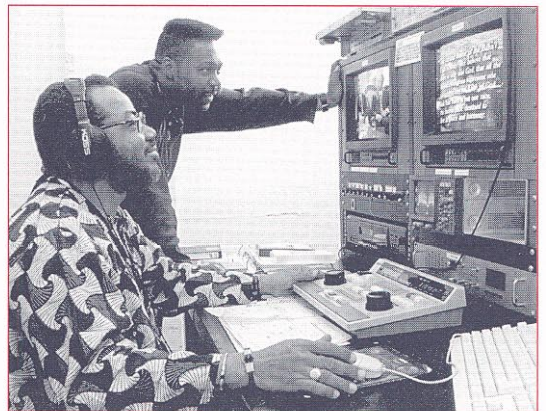
The Chicago area's 35,000 Haitian residents are more isolated from their homeland than their countrymen on the East Coast are. *Unity in Diversity* helps to keep Chicago Haitians connected with their heritage, at the same time that it gives people outside the community a taste of Haitian culture.

The program works to bridge other cultural gaps as well, like those between social classes, or between the French- and Creole-speaking older generation and the English-speaking younger generation of Chicago Haitians.

Ajanaku has been a fervent proponent of Public access, recruiting several other producers from the Haitian community to develop their own series, and even enlisting the support of the Haitian consulate.

"I don't have a plan for the show," Ajanaku says. "I try to be sensitive to trends in the community, and adapt the show along these lines. The vision is unfolding every week."

— Ed M. Koziarski



Azaka Ajanaku (left) with CAN TV production services coordinator Eugene Townsend.

OSHKOSH, WI

VUE THAO

Making the community aware of the Hmong culture is what led Vue Thao to the doors of Oshkosh Community Access Television (OCAT) in 1994.

Vue started out as a volunteer and began producing his own program about a year later. Oshkosh has a very large Hmong community, so when he suggested a show that catered to this group, OCAT executive director Jon Urben was very excited.

Today, Thao, 37, serves as the producer of *Hmong Oshkosh Community News*, a weekly show that highlights events and news of Oshkosh's Hmong population. "Producing the show was my dream," said Thao. "In Laos, the government produces all of the shows, so this was a rare opportunity to produce a show that promoted my people, culture and heritage."

While the show focuses on community events and traditional Hmong activities, Thao's real life story of coming to the United States is worthy of its own television show.

He was just 16 when he and his family were forced to leave their village of Vietiame, Laos and live in the jungle in order to escape execution by the Communist Pathet Lao regime. Eventually, Thao said goodbye to his family and set



out with 200 other refugees on a perilous journey to Thailand, then considered a safe haven.

After nearly a month of fighting soldiers, dehydration and hunger, Thao's group, now reduced to seven, reached the Mekong River and their final hurdle to freedom. Sadly, Thao was the only one to reach the other side. He then spend eight months in refugee camps before receiving approval to come to the United States.

After 13 years in Providence, Rhode Island, Thao moved to Oshkosh where a cousin lived. He was working as an electronics technician when he first arrived at OCAT, but now works as a technician/engineer for an area television station.

Thao continues to promote the traditional ways of the Hmong culture through his program and hopes to see the series grow. "I get a lot of enjoyment from doing this show. Maybe someday I can

even go back to Laos and do it."

—Jon Urben

TUCSON, AZ

LUIS HERNANDEZ

Public access television was the last thing on Luis Hernandez's mind. His son, Rocky, had been pulled over by the GITEM (Gang Intelligence Team Enforcement Agency of the Department of Public Safety) for cruising in a lowrider with several of his young Chicano friends. After Rocky's incident, Luis soon came to realize that just being a Chicano kid cruising in the company of other Chicano kids was perceived as "criminal" activity.

The complex issue of police/youth relations in Chicano communities was not something that Luis was very familiar with before his son's encounter with the GITEM unit. His generation came from very different experiences. As a Mexican-American born in Texas and a veteran of the Vietnam War, Luis was familiar with other struggles. His family had just been concerned with survival as they worked in the fields for a living. While times were hard, Luis never lost sight of making life better for himself and his family. He was the first in his family to go to college, earning a BA in Administration from California Poly Technical University, an MBA in Business Administration from the University of Southern California and a Ph.D. in Education from Arizona State University. However, all of the education and character Dr. Hernandez garnered over the years did not prepare him for the shock of having to explain to the GITEM unit that his son was simply out with friends and not engaging in illegal activity. How could he explain the difference to them? They had the cameras and the reports saying otherwise.

In a partnership with his son Rocky, Luis was determined to at

least educate his community on this difference. While Luis only took a few electives in college on television production, he understood the power of that medium. Together, they visited the local public access television station, Access Tucson. They became members and soon they completed the necessary production classes to produce *Riding Low AZ Style*. Weekly, this program highlights car club charity activities, car shows and cultural and political activities relating to Mexican-American human rights.

This father and son project has just completed its fourth year of production. Luis admits that through the production of *Riding Low AZ Style*, he has become more enlightened. Many of the things he learned were based on generational differences as opposed to cultural differences. So, after four successful years of focusing his work on Chicano youth issues, Luis decided to take on another challenge—educating the adult community on more complex Chicano issues. Hence the beginning of his new project entitled *Pueblo TV—The Sound of My People*. "I'm looking at making this a more issue-oriented kind of show," says Luis on his new project. "I also want to reach a more mature crowd. I want more politicians on this program. I want more people to see that we are like everybody else. I want youth to see what happens when you get your act together." On his experiences with public access, Luis sums up with the following, "Because of my degrees in business I understand the power of marketing. TV is the premiere marketing tool. You can hand out flyers, do radio, but there is nothing like TV to get your message out. People call me all the time to say they watch the shows—even a trucker staying in a Tucson hotel called me to say he loved it! Access Tucson is the easiest and best way to get your message to the people!"

—Miguel Ortega

MARCIA BARAHONA

As a woman and a minority, I have been able to use DCTV as a forum for exploring issues of race and ethnicity, self-identity and rape," says Marcia Barahona. Currently a member of Davis Community Television's board of directors, Barahona credits her cultural background with her involvement in community media. In 1993, DCTV staff recruited Barahona, then a volunteer at UC Davis' student-run radio station, to host a magazine segment on *La Raza Cultural Days*. "They wanted someone familiar with the culture and the event to host the show," she says. With a Spanish-language radio show, articles published in numerous student and community newspapers, and work in community theater, Barahona was a natural in front of the camera. Barahona stayed involved, participating in the Davis Video Project in 1995.

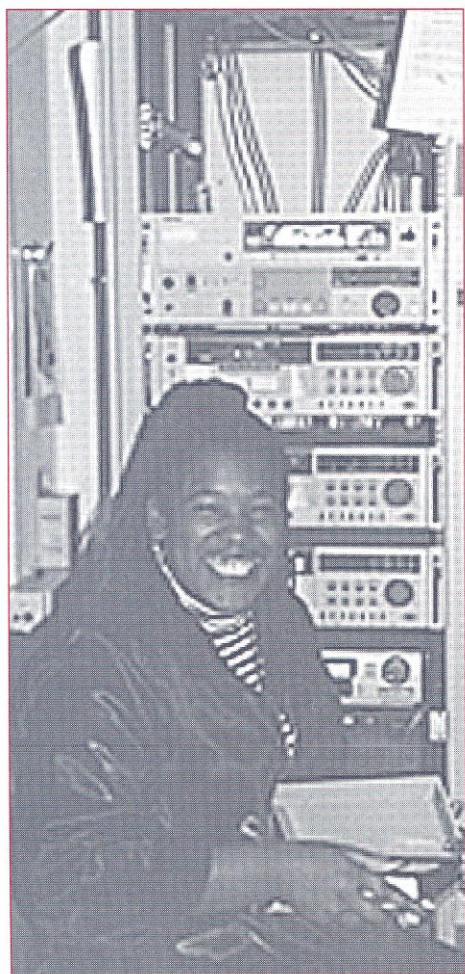
"My videos exposed my personal take on what being a Latina woman is and how my mixed Latin American background has shaped who I am," Barahona says. "Although I have participated in projects in which ethnicity isn't the main focus, just by being Latina I have exposed others to my culture and identity," she says. "My cultural background has directly or indirectly permeated my work in media and helped highlight what can be accomplished through the unbiased world of community television."

"Community media opens doors for people of all walks of life, lets us explore issues going on in the community, and exposes viewers to issues they may not be familiar with," she adds. "I would like to think that my work at DCTV has helped the community better understand some of the issues and concerns that women and Latinos deal with."



In addition to her work with DCTV, Barahona is currently a full-time student and will graduate with a bachelor's degree in Spanish Literature and Communications from UC Davis in June of 2001. In her "spare" time, she sings at Bay Area Latin American restaurants on the weekends.

— Autumn Labbe-Renault



DENISE AUGUST-HARRISON

Denise August-Harrison, a 33-year-old African American woman, wears the many different hats that are necessary to operate a successful community media center. As a production assistant for Contra Costa Television (CCTV), Contra Costa County's government access station located in Martinez, California, Denise is an example of the dedicated staffer that most access centers rely upon.

She started her career at Mount Diablo Television (Mt.D. TV) in Pleasant Hill, California. Mt.D. TV is a television broadcasting school where students learn how to become character generator (CG) operators, floor directors, technical directors, field operatives, camera operators, audio technicians and eventually directors. Mt. D. TV aired live from CCTV, which led Denise to develop a relationship with CCTV.

Denise started working for CCTV as a student worker with various duties too numerous to count. Now, as the production assistant, she produces a National Telly Award-winning live, call-in talk show called *Mental Health Perspectives*. Her production duties include camera operator, technical director, video tape operator, floor director, phone operator, set construction, teleprompter operator, field taping, editor, graphics, logging, equipment inventory, tape distribution and producer.

Beyond the show, she writes press releases and participates in the marketing of CCTV programs. In the daily operation of the station, Denise runs from scheduling and research to training employees, interns, and contractors for the station.

Having control over the production of her own show is a great joy for Denise. She has been producing *Mental Health Perspectives* for over a year and it is now enjoying its second season. The show began when the Contra Costa County Health Service Department and Mental Health Division expressed the need for a series that focused on mental illnesses, wellness, disabilities, and recovery. Contra Costa County crisis center calls have tripled since the first show aired. Denise takes great pride in these accomplishments. "It is an absolute thrill to see the effects of your hardwork on the community."

SAN PABLO, CA

NIEVES SAMPAYO

Nieves Sampayo's overriding goal is to help students succeed. A refugee from Cuba, she helped start one of the first bilingual education programs in America while living in Florida during the 1960s. Her odyssey eventually brought her to Contra Costa College in San Pablo, California, where she eventually became a manager of special programs.

Reluctantly pushed by a dean to start producing videos, she has come to love it and has succeeded admirably. Her first programs were about gender equity, or how to get women more interested in those careers in which they have been historically under-represented. From there she branched out to a host of other issues that were of great interest to the local community, which consists primarily of people of African, Asian, and Hispanic heritage.

Her passion is leveling the educational playing field for peo-



ple who find schooling difficult because of language or other barriers. In San Pablo, there are a large number of immigrants from Latin America, and her video programs have been especially helpful to them. Programs have covered such topics as the college admission process, financial aid, educational support services, summer jobs, mentoring, the process of becoming a citizen, and ways for immigrants to become more empowered in their community. Most video programs have been live with viewer call-ins. The programs are made more interesting by the use of edited packages, and there are occasional special touches such as incorporating two-way video conferencing.

To Nieves, television is a perfect technology to use with minority groups. She says, "Most homes have a television set, most families watch television at some point together, so we don't affect only the life of our students, but of the whole family...Television is so visual that even if the people watching it do not get all the words, they can still get concepts by what we show visually."

Nieves puts as much effort into developing an audience as she does in producing programs. She helps set up assemblies in local high schools and special viewing sites at community centers. She is always pushing the college to move into new areas, both technologically and humanistically, so that there will be far fewer people falling through the educational cracks.

— Barry Benioff and Nick Dunn

PETALUMA, CA

HÉLDER RODRIQUEZ

"I think we have a mission in this world and that mission is to help each other," says Hélder Rodriquez, Petaluma Community Access (PCA) Programming Director. Rodriquez, 25, is living his dream of helping create community through media.

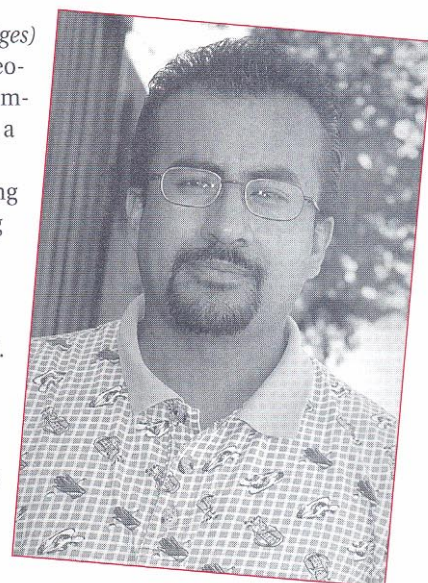
A native of poverty-ridden and war-torn El Salvador, Hélder currently lives quietly with his parents in Petaluma, California. This is unlike his former life in San Salvador (capital of El Salvador), where countless relatives shared a house. He and his parents left El Salvador in 1990 to escape war. Hélder has been an exceptionally responsible person since early in his life. At age nine, he decided to take Tae Kwon Do classes, turning away from the rough ways of his peers, who often became involved in drugs and violence. Even at this young age, he understood that working hard and becoming very good at something was a way to save himself from trouble of many kinds—and today he passes this knowledge along to teenagers by encouraging them to become technicians and producers of public access television. Two teens have worked regularly with Hélder for the last two years to produce his shows on PCA, and others are involved frequently. Hélder feels that the teens he involved in his shows use their time in a more productive way than they would without these projects. They now try to get other people involved, looking for friends to join them. "I bring in minority people and get them involved, which would be hard for them otherwise," he says.

The Puenters (Bridges)

Program interviews people who help in the community and *Reflexion*, a program taped at St. Vincent's church during mass, are two ongoing examples of Hélder's work, and he is involved with other aspects of PCA as well. He frequently gets thank you letters for doing programming in Spanish. According to Hélder, "PCA is the only reliable news in Spanish in

Petaluma." When asked what his dream show might be, Hélder responds "Working with George Lucas to produce something like a Spanish speaking *Star Wars* where there are Latino superheroes." A favorite project is a short Tae Kwon do program—a 10 minute show on the Doyang (the Korean word for school) which Hélder runs in Petaluma.

Hélder is busy building a new PCA "family". "I always wanted to get involved because community access has done a lot of good in this community."



OLYMPIA, WA



SUE & BEN CHARLES

Sue and Ben Charles do not seek the spotlight. They are quiet advocates for their causes, among which are community inclusiveness, equal treatment for all, and democratic communication. They have combined their talent for story telling through media with their passion for their heritage and culture to create outstanding programs that have enlightened and embraced their entire community.

Sue and Ben are Native American media producers. Ben is a member of the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe and Sue has cultural roots in the Blackfoot tribe. They were recently honored by the Alliance for Community Media as the recipients of the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity. The award recognizes their efforts to bring diversity to community media in order to

enhance cultural understanding.

Native Media, the nonprofit production and education group created by Ben and Sue, educates others about native issues, communities and concerns. Using community media, they bring stories of the Northwest native people to life. Their award-winning series, *Northwest Native Culture*, has featured Native American veterans, showcased native artists, helped native youth explore their heritage, and shared native drumming and songs. They have taken their cameras on canoe trips on the Puget Sound and into tribal gatherings. While Sue directs the programs, Ben is often seen in front of the camera as the host.

The Charles family also advocates for the rights of the disabled. They are also closely involved with the disabled community and have produced several programs that have been a creative outlet for groups of developmentally and physically challenged adults.

Sue and Ben involve themselves in all aspects of community media. They have been active members at Thurston Community Television in Olympia, Washington for the past nine years. Their participation goes beyond producing programs. Sue has been a member representative on the TCTV Board of Directors for five years, and Ben served on the policy review committee.

When presented with the Jewell Ryan-White award, Sue expressed frustration with a broadcast news crew's treatment of tribal elders that she had witnessed. "You don't have to be rude or disrespectful to capture moments with your camera," she told the audience. "Treat your subjects with respect and the story will unfold." This is the method she and Ben have used to archive wonderful stories about their tribe and the community...respect for the integrity of their subject combined with an unshakable belief in the need for community media.

— Deb Vinsel

HONOLULU, HI

LURLINE MCGREGOR

Lurline McGregor, a native Hawaiian and president and CEO of 'Olelo Community Television, was born and raised in Hawaii, the descendant of a longtime kamaaina (local) family. She's worked in Washington, DC on the staffs of both Representative Cecil Heftel and Senator Daniel Inouye, most notably researching and drafting legislation benefitting native Hawaiians.

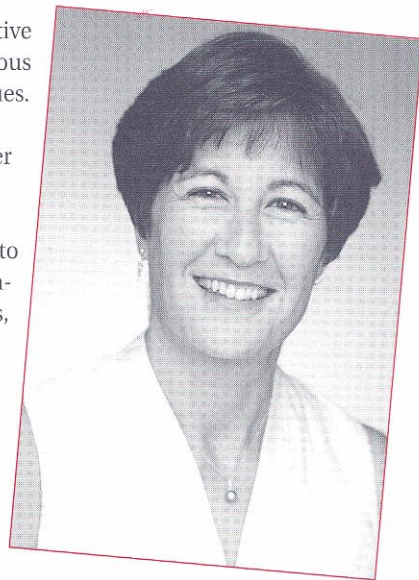
In Hawaii, she was executive director of Pacific Islanders in Communication, a group that encouraged the indigenous peoples of the Pacific to tell their own stories through video and film. Her exemplary work there earned her national recognition: two documentaries produced under her aegis won the coveted CINE Eagle award and another two-hour documentary, *Storytellers of the Pacific*, won several national and international awards. The three programs were subsequently aired nationally on PBS.

McGregor's accomplishments since she took the helm of 'Olelo Community Television three years ago are equally impressive. She expanded the access center's reach into the Oahu community by establishing two rural satellite studios, one in Kahuku and one in Waianae. She created a partnership with the local PBS station, KHET, whereby 'Olelo can televise PBS programming. She revamped the channel make up of 'Olelo and started NATV, a

channel dedicated to native Hawaiian, other indigenous peoples and cultural issues.

McGregor will be the first to tell you that all her efforts to improve 'Olelo are secondary to the real task at hand, and that is to encourage local programming. "After all," she says, "the purpose of public access is free speech. 'Olelo is an incredible media resource for the community and our main job is to make certain that people take advantage of what's available."

McGregor is presently working on a one-hour documentary about this year's journey of the voyaging canoe Hokule'a from Hawaii to Tahiti and Rapa Nui. McGregor and an 'Olelo cameraman accompanied the canoe for a portion of its trip. McGregor's dedication to both community media and her heritage can be seen through all aspects of her work.





CHICAGO, IL

AUDREY AVILA

The 10 young women interviewed in the video *Thoughts on Diversity* have a lot in common. They're all in their teens, they're very conscious of the damage caused by prejudice, and they share some hope that society is getting better at dealing with difference.

The girls represent a variety of ethnic mixes. They come from different neighborhoods, and they go to different schools. They describe wide discrepancies in the levels of diversity and tolerance in the own homes and communities.

Using training and equipment from CAN TV, Audrey Avila, 18, asked each of the young women to reflect on society's attitudes and their own toward race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and disability.

Avila compiled the interviews into the 48-minute program *Thoughts on Diversity*, which has been nationally recognized with a Gold Award from the Girl Scouts of America.

"Diversity is something I'm always interested in asking people about, partly because my mom and dad are in an ethnically mixed marriage," Avila says. "People have made remarks to me that reflected prejudice or ignorance, often because they don't know my ethnic background, which by appearance could represent several different ethnic groups."

One girl spoke of being racially harassed at a convenience store. Another told about being turned away from her high school prom when she brought her girlfriend as her date. The girls expressed varying ideas about the causes and solutions for prejudice. Some showed frustration with the prejudice they saw in their schools, their communities, their own families, or in the media.

"My project allowed the girls I interviewed to have a voice," Audrey says. "They learned that they are not the only ones who suffer from feelings of not being accepted. Hopefully people who see the tape will have their eyes opened about the problems we deal with in today's society."

— Ed M. Koziarski

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TUCSON 2000 A WARM MEMORY

CONFERENCE A TESTAMENT TO HARD WORK AND COOPERATION

*T*he Alliance for Community Media's national conferences are the result of a great deal of hard work by the national board, the national staff and the local planning committee. The Alliance International Conference and Trade Show, Tucson 2000, was a testament to how that hard work and cooperation pays off.

Held at the Westin La Paloma Resort at the base of the Catalina Mountains in Tucson Arizona, the conference opened with a performance by a local high school mariachi band and a welcome by Tucson City Council member, Steve Leal. Over the next three days 55 workshops and training sessions were held with subjects ranging from re-franchising to media literacy to serving diverse communities. This year, a special "Kids' Media Camp" was held with 14 participants ranging from age eight to 14. Also this year, the Trade Show was expanded to include 40 equipment and services vendors and non-profits.

Some of the highlights of the conference were the awards luncheon (see story page 24), the trade show reception, the Friday Night Monsoon Madness Pool Party and a keynote address by Academy Award-winning screenwriter and director Frank Pierson. Mr. Pierson shared his experience of over 40 years working in Hollywood and how much creative independence has been sacrificed to media convergence and studio consolidation.

The Hometown Video Awards ceremony was held in a beautifully restored historic theatre in downtown Tucson, the



Alliance national board members with keynote speaker Frank Pierson, center.

Temple of Music and Art. The production of the Hometown Awards was accented by a fabulous theatrical set, a terrific job of emceeing by Jan Leshner and the direction of Jim Thomas.

At the close of the conference, attendees gathered to experience a "drumming ceremony," where drummers representing African American, Korean, Cuban and Puerto Rican, Native American and Native Hawaiian and elder women communities performed for

over an hour. The individual performances culminated in all of the drummers performing simultaneously bringing the conference attendees to their feet to clap and dance.

Access Tucson, Sam Behrend and the local planning committee, provided a hospitality reflecting the openness, warmth and multi-cultural beauty of the Southwest desert. Tucson 2000 will long be fondly remembered by Alliance conference attendees.



A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY MEDIA

ALLIANCE HONORS LEADERS AT 2000 CONFERENCE IN TUCSON

The Alliance for Community Media National Conference is an opportunity for media practitioners to come together and honor outstanding peers who have contributed greatly to the development of community media. At the July conference in Tucson, the Alliance held a luncheon, sponsored by The Recovery Network, to acknowledge the year 2000 recipients of the Alliance awards: the Jewell Ryan White Award for Cultural Diversity, the Sue Buske Leadership Award, and the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications.

Deborah Vinsel, of Thurston Community Television (TCTV) in Olympia, Washington, presented the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity to Ben and Sue Charles, producers and board members for TCTV. Vinsel stated that the efforts of the Charles at TCTV had led to a greater understanding of tribal issues and had helped bridge gaps in understanding through the telling of stories. Ben Charles expressed his gratitude for the award, and stated that his wife Sue was the producer, describing himself as a "gofer." Sue Charles stated that she valued community media as it allowed her to capture significant moments and historical events without being disrespectful to the subjects, the tribal people of the northwest. She thanked her husband and their daughter Stephanie, and concluded "If we hold hands and work together, we have the strength to accomplish anything."

Alliance Board Chair Rob Brading presented the Sue Buske Leadership Award to Alan Bushong, former Alliance Board Chair and Director of Capital Community Television in Salem, Oregon. Brading spoke of the leadership Bushong has shown for community media over the past 22 years in both Salem, Oregon and Austin, Texas. Bushong served 12 years on the Alliance national board, and three years each as national board Treasurer, Public Policy Committee Chair, and national board Chair. Bushong thanked the Alliance for the Award and stated that it was his privilege to work with the best people that he knew, at the best job, for the best cause. He thanked many current and past leaders in community media, and specifically thanked his daughter Erica. He spoke about the need to develop future leadership and his joy in meeting people at the conference who were new to the field of community media, but whom he felt would provide great contributions.

Tim Goodwin, managing editor of *Community Media Review*, introduced Dirk Koning, the recipient of the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications. Goodwin recounted a friendship and association with Koning for over 20 years, which



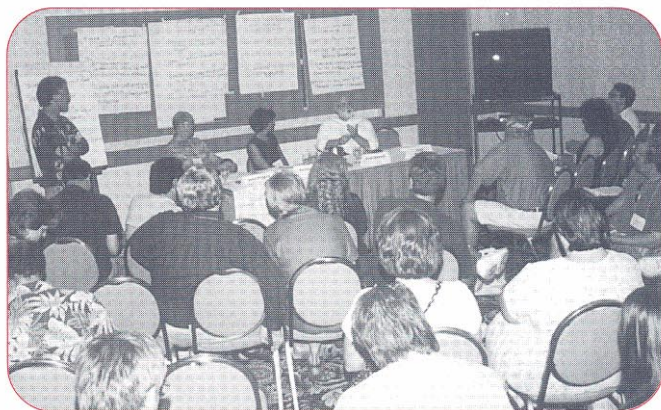
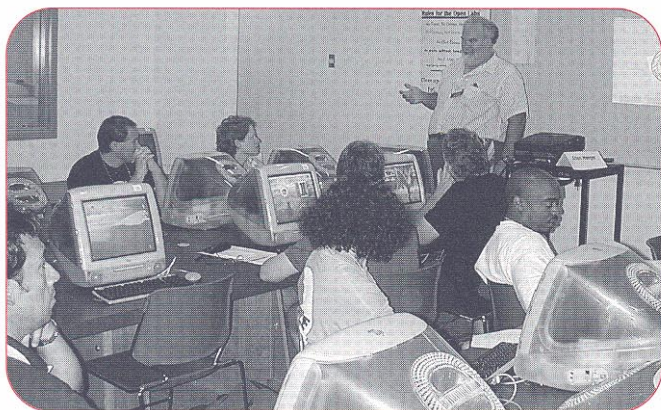
The 2000 Alliance award winners, l to r, Dirk Koning (George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications), Alliance chairperson Rob Brading, Sue and Ben Charles (Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity) in front of Alliance Executive Director Bunnie Riedel, and Alan Bushong (Sue Buske Leadership Award).

included the founding of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center (GRCMC) of which Koning is executive director. Among Koning's accomplishments include his almost 20 years as executive director of the GRCMC, service as Central States Regional Chair and as a member of the national board, and being a past recipient of the Roxie Cole Award and the Sue Buske Leadership Award. Koning stated that receiving the Stoney Award was the greatest tribute he could have in his career. He introduced his family in the audience and provided a series of "What if." questions regarding the future of community media (see page 27 of this issue).

These recipients are excellent examples of the people that commit themselves to the field of community media. Honoring the contributions of these individuals provides inspiration for others in the field, as well as for future leaders, and demonstrates the potential of community media to provide a unique service for the development of communities and the expression of cultural and individual expression. The Alliance will choose three more winners for next year's awards. Nominations will be accepted in the spring, so consider who should be honored with one of these special awards.

— Jennifer A. Krebs

Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity — Ben and Sue Charles
Sue Buske Leadership Award — Alan Bushong
George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications — Dirk Koning



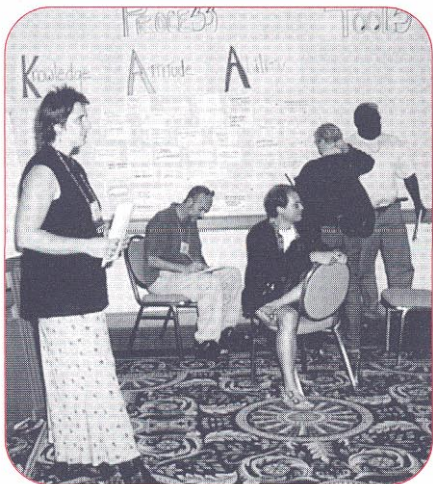
by Deborah Vinsel

Program Planning Chair, Tucson 2000

Tucson 2000 is now a very pleasant memory. We had a great conference and trade show, a wonderful setting and lots of fun. All the planning worked. Planning the program for a national conference is not a job for one person. Designing all the workshops, recruiting speakers, and filling in all the little gaps that pop up takes a dedicated team of people. We had a great program planning team for Tucson 2000, and I greatly appreciate all of their time and effort to make the conference a success.

We started working on the Tucson conference almost as soon as the Cincinnati conference ended. First, the Conference Planning Committee of the Alliance Board reviewed comments from previous conferences to determine the broad topics we needed to cover. These became the conference tracks. We wanted a blend of new topics and old favorites. We also wanted to give our vendors the chance to participate.

Next, we designed the conference schedule—how many workshops, when could they be scheduled, what special meetings need to be included, and how can we make everything fit into three days? We



WORKSHOPS DEFINE THE CONFERENCE

PLANNING THE PROGRAMMING IS A TEAM SPORT

wanted there to be enough leisure time in the schedule for folks to enjoy our setting and/or visit the trade show. We also had to take into consideration the logistics of moving people to offsite venues for workshops or events. It's a puzzle that has many solutions. Finding the right one for the conference took some trial and error. In the end, we settled on two sessions for Thursday and Friday with one on Saturday. It was a pretty good fit.

To spread the workload, track coordinators were assigned to each track. The track coordinators were responsible for helping recruit speakers and design workshops to fill in any gaps. I couldn't have done this job without the effort of these people. A really BIG thank you to the Tucson 2000 Track Coordinators: Dave Vogel; Pat Garlinghouse; jesikah maria ross; Eric Zipf; Randy Van Dalsen; Ron Cooper; Ric Hayes; Alan Bushong; Carl Kucharski; Laurie Cirivello; and Karen Toering.

Time for the fun (read "challenging") part—designing workshops. The program planning team was responsible for coordinating 55 workshops for the Tucson conference. We issued a "Call for Workshops" to the Alliance membership asking them to design workshops and recruit the speakers for it. We tried a couple of differ-

ent things this year. We asked that the number of presenters for workshops be limited, where possible, to no more than two people. We also asked for the workshop style to be as interactive and dynamic as possible. We had a great response with some very creative and informative workshops offered to go along with the tried and true perennial favorites. Thanks also to all of the members who designed and presented workshops. Special thanks to Lisa Horner, Dirk Koning, Elliott Margolies, and Sam Behrend for their help recruiting speakers.

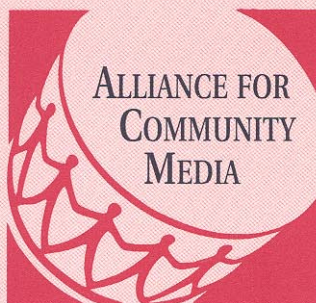
Workshops are only part of the story. The numerous other events and activities



scheduled during the conference were coordinated by either the local planning committee, or the board of directors. The Hometown Ceremony, keynote lunches, opening and closing ceremonies, pool party and conference logistics were all handled by different people and committees. Like I said, planning a national conference is a team sport. We had a winning team for Tucson 2000.

We're gearing up for the 2001 conference in Washington D.C. Information about the planning process and how you can help will be posted on the Alliance listserv in the next couple of months.

Deborah Vinsel is executive director at Thurston Community Television in Olympia, WA. She can be contacted at dvinsel@tctv.net.



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ACCESS 101

FROM MANAGEMENT TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The idea for the Access 101 Track emerged somewhere in the Southwest Region when David Vogel (Knoxville, TN) and Pat Garlinghouse (Houston, TX) were challenged to go beyond the usual 'Q & A Format,' thus: Bring all your questions...we'll answer them all! More specific, attendees wanted enough time available at workshops where they could bring their ideas, brainstorm with the group, cogitate individually and return to their centers with ready-to-go applications. If that's not confusing enough, mix ideas and discussion from around the country, exhaust all possibilities yet reach consensus on a final product...such an order!

Old and new to access alike formed discussion groups, pow-wows and solutions about how to run PEG Access! Many attendees were able to develop programming policy, for example, share with the group and return at a later session with policy for commercial programming or scheduling controversial programming. The audience was the focal point of discussion from which many solutions arose.

The topics of discussion ran the gamut from PEG management, cable law and the First Amendment, to operating models and policies, personnel issues, 'difficult people' and marketing your goods. Those who stayed for the entire five-session track returned home with an armload of access goodies. Dave and Pat have been building on this format for several years and will give it another twist in Austin, Texas at the South West Regional Conference in October.

— Pat Garlinghouse



"WHAT IF?" KONING ASKS CONFEREES

"What if we could clone George Stoney's wit and wisdom to call on when needed..."

Dirk Koning, executive director of the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, received the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications at the 2000 Alliance Conference. The following is his address to conferees.

This is the greatest honor in my professional career...determined by my peers...in a field with such determined and intelligent leaders...special thanks to Tim Goodwin, my mentor and friend for 20 years ...what a luxury to have Tim available for concepts and applications and feedback...thank you Tim.

Also I want to thank my family who is with me today for sharing me with this movement...my daughter Kelly, son Shaun and wife Ginger...special thanks.

And what an honor to have George (Stoney) here. I just want to share one George story...I call this the Stoney Factor. Last year at the Alliance conference in Ohio, George got on an elevator I was on at the 11th floor. He said, "Dirk, I need you to do something for me." I said sure George, what's up. He said, "There is a Brazilian delegation in the lobby that asked me to speak at a national organizing conference for community television but I'm preparing to go to Ireland and I think it would be better if you could go." I said sure and he stepped off at the fourth floor.

Between last year's conference and this one I have been to Brazil four times helping with the development of community media. Thank you George.

I was asked to talk of the future, but before that I would like to suggest we celebrate the past. As you heard we are planning to publish a double *CMR* edition next year celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Alliance for Community Media and we need all your stories and photos and input.

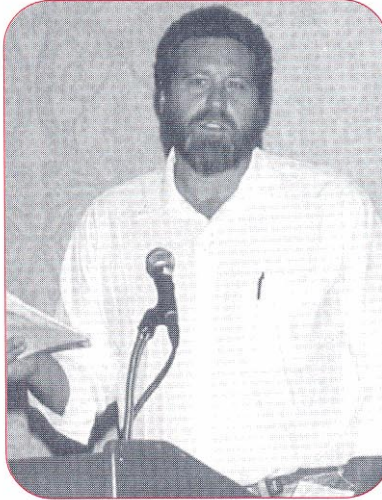
Also plans are progressing for the National Archives of Community Media for video tape preservation so save your tapes.

I would like to suggest we play a game here called, "What If?". You are going to have to listen carefully since some of these are complicated. For example, What If the Hometown Awards Ceremony was less than two hours?

What if every access program ever made was on a video server on the world wide web, indexed by title and producer and keyword searchable....what if?

What if the President of the U.S. was a former access producer and she and her Education Secretary instituted media literacy into the K-12 curriculum...what if?

What if the United Nations amended the Human Rights Charter to ad access to information as a fundamental human right...



What you do—operating social service centers improving the quality of life via media—is more important now than ever. Your task is enormous. Your rewards are few. Your success is critical for democracy and survival of our species.

What if technology simplified quantum physics to the point that we all realized we are identical on the atomic level and we quit fighting over degrees of skin pigmentation....what if?

What if the world's languages could be stored in databases allowing computers to do simultaneous translations.

What if the other 80 percent of the world's population wants more than the 20 percent of the world's resources that they now receive...what if?

What if we could lay fat fiber optic cables into draught stricken areas and feed information as light waves to fuse hydrogen and oxygen to create water...what if?

What if our cities promoted success by announcing their household connectivity ratio and average bandwidth capacity available per citizen...what if?

What if indigenous peoples could use GPS units to map their lands to stop rogue developers...

What if Community Media received the money from a lottery to see who gets to peel Charleston Heston's cold dead fingers from his gun when he dies...

What if libraries digitized part of their collections freeing up 50 percent of their floor space to house Media Centers...

What if everyone in the Alliance read Marshall McLuhan's '64 classic, *Understanding Media – the extensions of man*...

What if governments managed public airwaves so the pirates were the commercial users...

What if our successors in this movement wore t-shirts that say, "Bit Stream Activist"...

What if Ted Turner remembered being in cable before cable was cool and donated his next billion to Bunnie to "jump start" the national office...

What if we followed cable's lead and donated two percent of our gross income to the national office to serve the movement...

What if the *Red Hot Chili Peppers* band wrote a top 10 hit about the digital divide...

What if we could clone George Stoney's wit and wisdom to call on when needed...

What if?

What you do—operating social service centers improving the quality of life via media—is more important now than ever.

Your task is enormous. Your rewards are few.

Your success is critical for democracy and survival of our species.

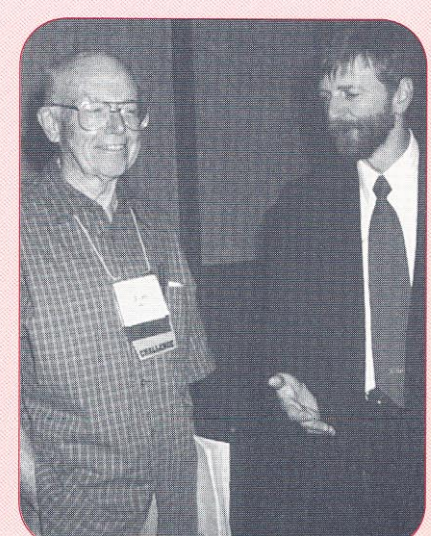
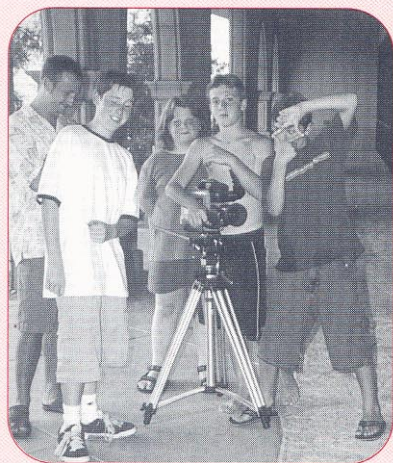
Power to the People.

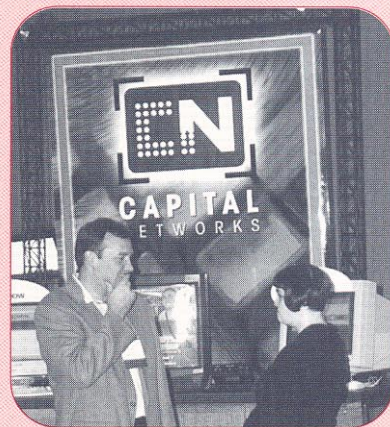
Thank you very much.



Caught in the Act

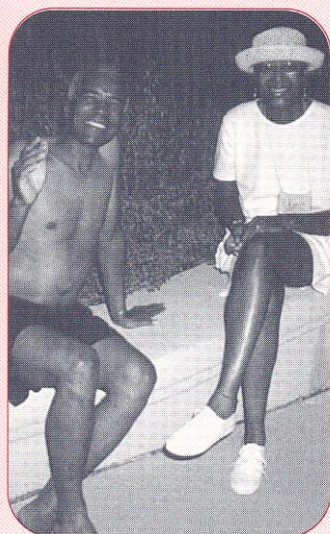
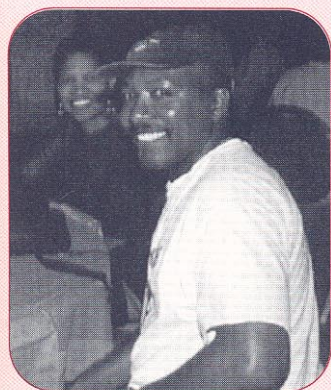
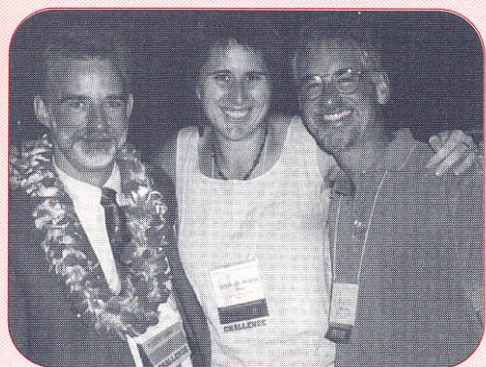
*The Alliance for Community Media
International Conference and Trade Show
Tucson, Arizona – July 12–15, 2000*





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*Conference photos courtesy
 Wendy Blom, Pat Garlinghouse,
 Ric Hayes and Tim Goodwin*

Fourth Annual International Community Media Festival
November 10-11, 2000 – Focus on Korea, featuring video screenings,
discussions and a Korean meal. Special Guest: Hye-Jung Park.
visit <http://mediafest.grcmc.org>

CMC congratulates the Alliance leadership award winners.
Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity — Ben and Sue Charles
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For more than 10 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

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Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Rob Brading,
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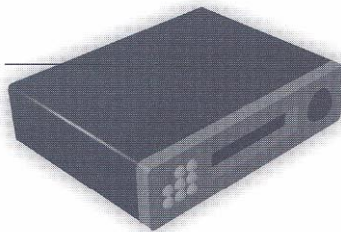
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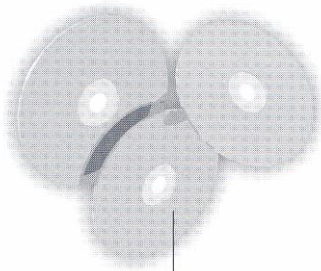
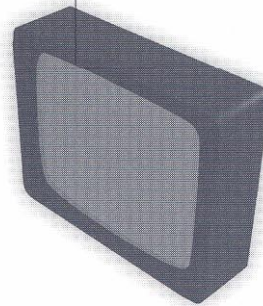
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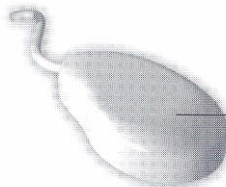
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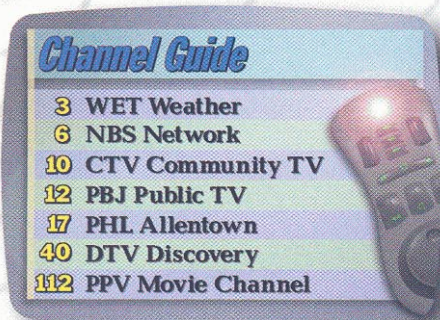
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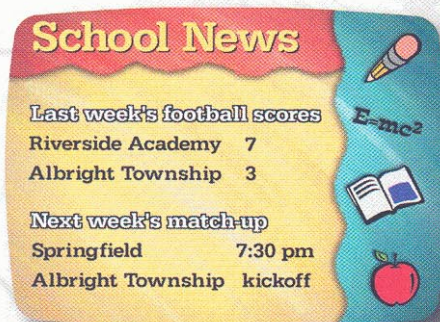
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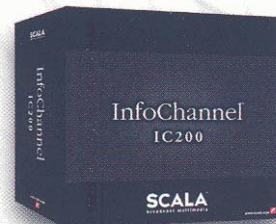
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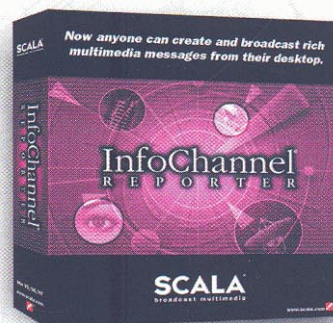


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